

Lone Star Diplomat

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82AM. 82HU. 83H

CONVOYS CONFOUND COMPUTERIST

by Conrad Minshall

Once upon a time, several weeks ago in fact, a sick and very bored programmer lay home in bed for a week. Temporarily all caught up in his reading of zine samples and back issues, he decided one day to write an adjudication program.

Yes I did. And I got thoroughly frustrated, too. That rulebook! I ran into so many ambiguities and inadequate definitions that I gave up by lunchtime.

Since then I've seen all but two of these discussed elsewhere. Of course, these two may or may not be original. Being a complete novice, the only way for me to find out is to invite public comment. Both plumb the very depths of triviality - YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

Both problems are twists on the dislodgement of an unwanted convoy - they vanish unless such is ruled as foiling the convoy.

The first problem is simply that the rulebook doesn't make explicit what does or does not constitute a valid "path" for a convoy. Consider the following moves:

ENGLAND: A Wal-Bre (F Eng c).
FRANCE: F Nth c English A Wal-Bre.
GERMANY: F Ska-Nth (F Den s).

France can argue that the dislodgement of Nth disrupted the Wal-Eng-Nth-Eng-Bre convoy route. Obviously, the rulebook should state that a "path" can contain a given fleet at most once.

The second problem (I hear your moan) is that the rulebook doesn't address the validity of specifying a coast on the destination of an army's move. In the following incredible set of orders, France and England are trying to foil the German convoy from Den to Stp:

ENGLAND: F Nth & F Nwg & F Bar c
German A Den-Stp.
FRANCE: F Eng-Nth (F Bel s).
GERMANY: A Den-Stp(sc) (F Bal &
F Bot c).

Germany can argue that the dislodgement of



1983 H

Longhorn

F 1903

F/R SOUTHERN STRATEGIES SUCCEED;
ITALO-AUSTRIAN COOPERATION NOTED

ENGLAND (Seth Owen): A BEL & A HOL s French
A Bur-Ruh [nsol], F Edi-YOR, F SKA-Den, F
NWY h (F NWG s).

FRANCE (Rick Ragsdale): A BUR-Mun, A GAS-
Bur, F Trh-TUN, F Pie-TUS, F Mid-WES.

GERMANY (John Mayes): F DEN s Russian F

Swe, A RUH s A Mun, A MUN s & A KIE s A Ruh.

ITALY (Mark Luedi): A Apu-ROM, A VEN s
Austrian A Tyo-Pie, F Adr-ION.

AUSTRIA (Greg Fritz): A Tyo-PIE, A TRI h (A
VIE s), F Bul(sc)-GRE (A SER s).

RUSSIA (Joe Gallagher): F SWE-Nwy, (A STP
s), A Syr-ARM (A SEV s), F Rum-BLA, A SMY-
Con.

TURKEY (Mike Cannon): F Bla-BUL(ec)

(F Gre s [ds], ret to Aeg, Alb or dsb) & F
CON s).

~ PRESS--

PAR-CON: Hope you've made a comeback.

PAR-BER: Great West Wall defense!

PAR-ROM: Your wish is my command: letters
(plural) arrived this month! How's that for
an eager response? Sorry I had to put into
Tunis for fuel - we'll leave as soon as our
tankers arrive from France.

GERMANY-ITALY: If France does write you and
talks about taking out a "corner country",
beware! It's probably you!

KAISER-LIMEY AND FROG: Had enough yet?

NOTES FROM TAI PAI: Beware, France, the
Englander knows your spot!

SUPPLY CENTER CHART for Winter Adjustments:

E:	Home, Bel, Hol, Nwy	6/even
F:	Home, Spa, Por, Tun	6/build 1
G:	Home, Den	4/even
I:	Rom, Nap, VEN, Tun	3/even
A:	Home, Ser, GRE, Ven	5/even
R:	Home, Rum, Swe, SMY	7/build 1
T:	Ank, Con, Smy, BUL, Gre	3/even [played 1 short]

Nth is irrelevant, since the English couldn't convoy Den to the south coast of Stp, where it was in fact ordered, and that the rulebook tacitly permits a coastal army destination. England and France can argue that the rulebook implicitly denies a coastal army destination and that there's no precedent. The GM perhaps should declare "attempted harassment of the GM" and eject all three of them.

★ ROUNDUP of Texas & International News

NEW LOOK. This is my first shot at computerizing the production of LSD. It has given me a chance to explore the capabilities of my system. WordStar plus my TI850 printer provides a choice of two typefaces which can be modified in several ways to produce 24 varieties of print (I have only found 23 of them, the last one eludes me). I'm not completely satisfied with the choices available, but for now I can live with them. Some of the options that I could use don't appeal to me (right justification, for example). I would like to add italics and true proportional spacing, either through a different printer or specialized software. I'll probably be experimenting with formatting in the next several issues until I can arrive at something I can live with. Suffice it to say that life with LSD is becoming easier. Keeping track of administrative trivia is not the chore it once was. The mailing list is on a dBaseII file. Financial records are on a SuperCalc spreadsheet. And letters, orders, etc. can be typed into WordStar files upon receipt. Then everything gets formatted when deadline day passes. It's possible that LSD will live a little longer if so much of the hassle of producing a zine becomes the job of the computer instead of the editor.

ANOTHER COA. Please send all your correspondence to my new address: 8008 Gault St., Austin, TX 78758. The phone number is the same. My roommates and I found a large 3-bedroom house with a big fenced yard and lots of shade trees not far from where we were "living" in a tiny apartment for the last six months. Caruso and Caspia like it much better here, and they are spending more time outdoors (goodbye, catbox!). My office is now housed in what was originally a 2-car garage and later remodeled into a family room which looks out onto the back patio and yard. It has plenty of room to set up all sorts of projects, including Diplomacy games. In fact, this house would be great for a minicon.

DIPCON/ORIGINS. I've heard from several LSD subbers that they plan to meet me over the Diplomacy board in Dallas June 21-24. It's been at least three years since I've played in a tournament, so please have mercy. Contact Al Pearson, Box 898, Charles Town, WV 25414 for DipCon data. For information about Origins, the concurrent event, write to Origins '84, Box 59899, Dallas, TX 75229. It is rumored that Delta will be offering discounts on airline tickets.

PLUG. Jeff Richmond, 3313 Platt Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48104, has announced the impending publication of FROBOZZ, just as soon as the first game fills. He describes his zine as a warehouse, with subfee set at \$3.50/ten issues and gamefee at \$4. I like the stars in his logo.

1982 AM

JALAPEÑO W 1906



ANGLO-ITALIAN ALLIANCE STRENGTHEN
INFANTRY; A-H DROPS TWO ARMIES

~ Two players requested that winter and spring be separated. Here are winter adjustments. Press is reserved until spring.

~ Winter 1906: England builds A Lon & A Edi; Italy builds A Rom; Austria removes A Mun & A Vie.

~ Both proposals failed. Vote next time on an E-I draw and a concession to England.



"A special offer for Mr. William Mueller in Wabash County! Dear Mr. Mueller, you may already have won a first-class world tour, a vacation home in the location of your choice, or any one of hundreds of other wonderful prizes! To see if you have won, Mr. Mueller, simply punch out the little blue token, and put it in the slot marked 'Yes' or 'No' on the enclosed postage-paid postcard. I earnestly hope you choose the 'Yes' slot, Mr. Mueller..."

IDHOF. Newest inductees to the International Diplomacy Hall of Fame include John Boardman, Allan B. Calhaver, Fred Davis, and Rod Walker. This is the second group to be so honored, joining Edi Birsan, Walt Buchanan, John Konig, John McCallum, John McCallum, Don Miller, Hal Naus, and Conrad von Matzke. I found out these results by reading other zines, although I participated in the selection/election process. Tacky.

STANDBY LIST. Byrne, Fritz, Martin, Mayes, Pierce, Quinn, and Tinker. Your name comes off the list at your request or when you take over an NMR position. There's always room for more.

M-GAME. Fritz, Pierce, Smith, Tatsch (or Maves), Milewski, and Albrecht have signed up in that order for the next (final?) LSD game. There is room for one more, and possibly two if geographical considerations prevent all these folks from playing. The game will start when one of the current games comes to an end.

Post Office of Texas

Dear Mike,

Thanks for printing my reply to Paul Milewski.

Bill Quinn has raised a good point. A game will be declared irregular if an "inconsistent" standby policy is used. If you call a standby for a 2-center country and/or a 1-center country early on in the game, and then four gameyears down the road you put a 4-center country in CD, it can be a cause for the game to be declared irregular. The reverse, however, is fine. The key is to be consistent.

Let's say you never call for a standby for a country of 3 or fewer centers. That is fine. But at a crucial point in the game, you can't call for a 1-center standby. Your policy has been set, and you must follow through.

Almost any standby policy is acceptable, but it must be used for the entire game. This is just the way it is done, and yes, there are reasons for it.

Since I've become BNC, I have seen games where standbys were called for 3- or 5-center countries, and then later in the game 8-, 10-, 12-, and even a 17-center country were put in CD. (In case I phrased that wrong, of course I'm talking about many separate games here).

The GMs excuse is always: I had no more standbys. But I think the GM could definitely find a standby for a nice-size position if he tried. Any GM could do exactly as you did - make a call for help, explaining his position. I know for a fact your plea got you myself and Bill. I've done it for other GMs as well.

I hope my explanation of the standby policy for the BNC is clear. If not, feel free to send me any questions, and I'll try and explain it better.

Take care, Kathy Byrne
160-02 43rd Ave.
Flushing, NY 11358

Dear Mike,

With all due respect to Kathy Byrne, I am not referring to two minor changes in the rulebook, much less changes that try to clarify ambiguities.

In one instance, the venerable rule on disrupted ambiguous convoy routes is completely reversed. Orders that fail under the old rulebook succeed under the new one.

In the second instance, assessment of player intent is injected into unwanted (?) convoy situation, a radical departure from

DEADLINE for all LSD games:

23 May 1984



"But surely you see the difference? My government sent yours an inadvertently confusing signal. That's not the same as a deliberately confusing signal."

general practice in the postal hobby regarding badly written orders, a favorite cause of Mark Berch for championing.

Am I the only one who finds it distinctly incongruous that our hobby is apathetic over which rulebook to use? Is this a Franz Kafka nightmare? In the same issue of LSD that Kathy sneezes at the question of which rulebook to use, Bill Quinn picks nits over LSDs standby policy for 3- or 4-center positions.

The question of rulebooks is of a higher order than the question of houserules on standbys, it seems to me. Have we inadvertently developed an entirely ad hoc rulebook by usage over time that has a separate and independent existence from the Avalon Hill rulebook?

Paul Milewski
PO Box 256
Batavia, OH 45103

Dear Mike:

I now realize, after further correspondence with Kathy Byrne, that I was confusing "irregular" with "variant". As many people who have played in games with me already know, I am capable of astounding thickheadedness.

In enlightened retrospect, my concern was what risk we run of inadvertently finding ourselves players of record in a variant. Variants are something in which I have virtually no background.

This is indicative of how dull and uneventful an existence I lead. Lack of mental stimulation appears to have slowed my wit.

Paul Milewski

W

1982 HU King Ranch S 1905

POPE GUIDO PRESSES BALKAN BATTLE;
ANGLO-FRENCH DETENTE DETECTED

~ Last season's Turkish order A ARM-Sev should have been underlined.

~ Winter 1904: Germany builds A Ber; Italy builds A Ven; Russia builds A War.

ENGLAND (Don Scheifler): A Lpl-WAL (F LON s), F Nat-NWG, F Nth-DEN, F Stp(nc)-BAR, A Nwy-STP.

FRANCE (Conrad Minshall): F Iri-MID (F ENG s), A BUR s A Bur [imp, unit holds], A GAS s A Bur, F Wal-Lon [dsl, ret to Iri or dsb].

GERMANY (Paul Milewski): A Kie-RUH (A MUN s), A BER s A Mun, A Bel-PIC, A Hol-BEL.

ITALY (Bill Quinn): F Ion-AEG, A Ven-TRI (F. ADR s), A Vie-BOH (A TYO s), A Gre-SER (A ALB & A BUL s).

RUSSIA (Fred Winter): A War-LVN, A Gal-VIE (A BUD s), F Sev-BLA, A Mos-SEV, A Swe-NWY, A Ser-Tri [dsl, ret to Rum or dsb].

TURKEY (Seth Owen?): NMR! A ARM, A CON, & F SMY u, hold.

~ Will Kathy Byrne, 160-02 43rd Avenue, Flushing, NY 11358, please stand by for Turkey?

~ PRESS--

DUBLIN-LONDON: Hey, you said you'd support Lon and Lpl in place. What gives?

LON-PAR: Hope I guessed right, and you moved to the defensive. Otherwise, I'm S.O.L.

LON-BER: Are we still friends?

BER-LON: Now that France has only two armies, I will try crashing in to save you. Satisfied?

BERLIN: Reports have reached the German capitol to the effect that Pope Guido was surrounded by terrorist ruffians who squeezed his ravioli until they burst. Too much antipasto? Who is this fellow called Pasto? Who cares?

FRANCE-AUSTRIA: You're the only one not answering my letters. Yes, I mean you! Wise up or I'll sic Turkey on you!

BUDAPESTO-NEW FRANCE (Gray Press Bureau): Emperor Franz heartily recommends alliance with Italy and Russia. Quoth he: "They really helped Austria out when she needed it."

SWITZERLAND: Come on guys, bury the hatchet with Jules Verne.

Garfield



★Lone Star Diplomat

the National Diplomacy Journal of Texas

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Subscriptions: Ten issues for \$3.00.

Game Openings: \$12.00. Some places available in LSD's last game.

Standbys: Sub credit for standbys who play to the end of game or elimination.

Awards: Winners get 20 free issues of LSD or equivalent, 2-way drawees get 14 issues, all other survivors get 10, & eliminated players get 6.

Alan B. Calhamer invented DIPLOMACY®, which was first published in 1959. The Avalon-Hill Game Company now publishes it.



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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